



The First Freeze—a seasonal landmark that changes everything

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Salad Turnips

I know I've already ranted at you all about these turnips, but I will say it again! Best. Turnips. Ever. Nobody ever gets excited about turnips but these are a different story. Crisp & supple in texture & super sweet in flavor, these are one of the most delicious raw munching veggies to add to any dip platter. The stems & leaves are also crisp & delicious like bok choy or tatsoi, & are nice and smooth unlike their fuzzy radish cousin. Enjoy the whole plant sauteed with tamari and served with rice, kimchi, and an egg ☺

Tatsoi

It's easy to mistake tatsoi for spinach. But tatsoi is better compared to its close cousin, bok choy. Bok Choy and Tatsoi taste nearly identical and lend themselves well for stirfries. Tatsoi has thinner stems & larger leaves – makes for even cooking!

Scarlet Kabocha

This giant roasted chestnut is my favorite squash! Savory & nutty, perfect to roast and enjoy on a cozy cold night.

Castelfranco Chicory

This beautiful, light, leafy chicory is the closest thing to lettuce that you'll find alive after a freeze. Perfect crisp green for sandwiches or salads, raw or cooked. I like to have wilted tangy balsamic castelfranco salad on the side of rich cheesy dishes, such as pasta or potatoes.

Leeks

Bunched Beets

Nicola Potatoes

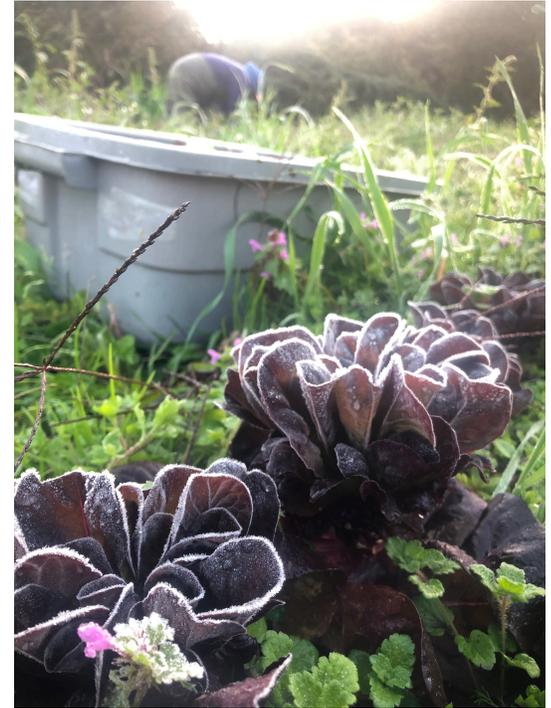
Red Onion

Willamette Sweet Onion

Hello, veggie lovers!

Well, we said our goodbyes last week, but here we are with one extra box of fall treats for our weekend pick-up members.

In the Willamette Valley, the first frost of the season generally comes in October, and there are usually a few light frosts before the first actual freeze that kills all our tomatoes and other summer plants dead. The water within the plant cells freezes and expands, bursting the cells open and breaking cell walls. When you wake up in the morning and that big squash plant or tomato in your garden suddenly appears to have melted, that is what has occurred.



The first frosty lettuce of the season from last week. It was a very chilly morning in a field right next to the river, the sun yet to peak over the hill to warm us up.

The first freeze puts an end to late summer harvests that were just barely hanging on, officially signalling that summer is over. Not only does the freeze change what crops we have available, it changes the entire order of operations in our day. During the summer, every day is a race against the rising sun, a rush to harvest all the salad mix and other wiltables before 10 am. We walk through luscious lettuce plantings and harvest whole heads rapidly, cutting them at the base and letting the perfect bite-sized leaves fall into the tub.

After the first freeze, all that changes. We start our day clipping onions cozy in a greenhouse until the crops have thawed out enough to harvest, and then we go out and play a very expensive game of i-spy, looking for lettuce that isn't dead yet, hidden safely under the insulation of the weeds. The pretty frosty lettuce pictured above is an example of something you would pass in the field and not harvest, only going for the plants that show no signs of frost. This is a big reason why chicories are the way of the future, because they are a magic lettuce relative that not only hold their own in freezing temperatures, but actually get sweeter and sweeter the colder it gets.

And for all of us working in the fields, the first frost marks a long winter of cold muddy days ahead, of waddling around bundled up in too many sweaters and rain gear, and trying to make your fingers work when they just don't wanna. But the big shift that I think we all are enjoying this season is a new feeling of gratitude for what are now cozy masks on our faces, after a long summer of stewing in our own face sweat. It's all about the little things ☺

—All my best, your vegicator, LB markets@gatheringtogetherfarm.com

We'd love to see what you're doing with your CSA box! Tag us on social media @gatheringtogetherfarm!

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CHICORY POTATO GRATIN WITH WALNUTS & GRUYERE



Adapted from <https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1012810-endive-and-potato-gratin-with-walnuts>

INGREDIENTS

- 1 head Chicory, roughly chopped or ripped
- Salt to taste
- 1-pound yellow potatoes, quartered
- ¼ cup broken walnut pieces
- 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, chopped
 - (Or whatever herbs you have on hand)
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- ½ cup grated Gruyère cheese (2 ounces)
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Oil a two-quart baking or gratin dish. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Fill a bowl with ice water. When the water comes to a boil, salt generously and add the chicory pieces. Blanch for a little over a minute, and transfer to the ice water. Cool in the ice water, then drain and dry on paper towels. Move to a bowl.
2. Steam the quartered potatoes for 10 to 15 minutes until tender. If the potatoes are large, cut the quarters in half. Add to the bowl with the greens, along with the walnuts, parsley, thyme, walnut oil and half the Gruyère. Season with salt and pepper and toss everything gently together. Turn into the prepared baking dish, making sure to scrape all of the contents of the bowl into the dish. Sprinkle the remaining Gruyère over the top.
3. Place in the oven and bake 20 to 25 minutes, until the edges of the vegetables are browned and the gratin is sizzling. Remove from the heat and serve hot or warm.

TATSOI & CHICKEN MUSHROOM STIR FRY



Adapted from <https://farmsharemania.wordpress.com/2010/09/15/tatsoi-and-chicken-stir-fry/>

INGREDIENTS

- Olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/3 lb. mushrooms of your choice, torn or chopped
- 1 lb. boneless chicken cut (or add in chicken from a roast)
- 1 bunch tatsoi
- salt and pepper to taste
- soy sauce
- Teriyaki or other marinade (I used sesame ginger)
- Jasmine rice (prepared according to package directions)

DIRECTIONS

1. I marinated the chicken in a sesame ginger sauce prior to cooking it. Then I cooked it in a frying pan over a medium high heat and set it aside while I cooked the rest of the ingredients.
2. Sauté garlic in olive oil over medium heat until you start to smell the garlic.
3. Add mushrooms and sauté about 3 minutes.
4. Add tatsoi stems and cook about two minutes. Salt and pepper to taste.
5. Add a couple of tablespoons of soy sauce and stir fry another minute.
6. Add tatsoi greens and steam with a cover for about 3 minutes.
7. Add chicken and serve hot over the jasmine rice. In the past I did not marinate the chicken when making stir fry and I am glad that I did this time. It definitely added more flavor to the dish. This is also the first time that I sautéed the stems first and then the greens and it made a big difference. The greens cook so fast that it helped to keep them from getting overcooked. This dish cooked fast and was delicious! Enjoy!